

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOGADI 01485 01 OF 02 301011Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----110833 301019Z /16

O R 300915Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5228
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MOGADISCIO 1485

EXDIS

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, ET, SO, US, UR
SUBJ: SIAD'S INTENTIONS IN MOSCOW AND ADDIS

REF: MOGADISCIO 1475

SUMMARY: SIAD TOLD EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE FOR MOSCOW THAT HE INTENDS TO YIELD NOTHING TO BREZHNEV IN MOSCOW. SIAD STILL CONFIDENT THAT ETHIOPIANS CANNOT RETAIN DIRE DAWA AND THAT FIGHTING FAVORS WSLF AND ELF. HE DOESN'T BELIEVE MENGISTU CAN SURVIVE IN ADDIS AND IS CONVINCED THAT EPRP IS MOST LIKELY TO FORM SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENT. HE ATTRIBUTES US FAILURE TO SUPPORT HIM WITH WEAPONS TO US SUPPORT FOR EDU FORCES AND OUR BELIEF THAT PRO-WESTERN GOVERNMENT WILL FOLLOW MENGISTU'S FALL. HE BELIEVES US WRONG. END SUMMARY.

1. I HAD LONG TALK WITH EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR AT RESIDENCE
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EVENING OF AUGUST 29 IN WHICH HE REVIEWED FOR ME HIS MOST RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH PRESIDENT SIAD' THEY DEAL WITH HIS TRIP TO MOSCOW, TO CAIRO AND HIS PERCEPTION OF ETHIOPIAN SITUATION.

2. SIAD TRIP TO MOSCOW: SIAD SUMMONED AMBASSADOR KHAIRAT TO PRESIDENCY SATURDAY MORNING AUGUST 27 AND TOLD HIM OF

HIS DECISION TO GO TO MOSCOW. HE SAID HE HAD BEEN UNDER PRESSURE FROM RUSSIANS THEIR AFRICAN FRIENDS (MOZAMBIQUE AND MADAGASCAR GOVTS) TO ACCEPT BREZHNEV INVITATION AND HE HAD DECIDED TO GO. BUT HE FIRST WANTED TO GO TO JIDDA TO SEE KING KHALID, THEN ON TO CAIRO TO TALK WITH SADAT TO ARRANGE STRATEGY. HE WOULD TRAVEL VIA SOMALI AIRLINES AND SOVIET PLANE WOULD THEN PICK HIM UP IN CAIRO. KHAIRAT CALLED FAHMY TO ARRANGE VISIT AND ANNOUNCEMENT SUBSEQUENTLY MADE BY MENA THAT SIAD COMING. MORNING OF DEPARTURE (AUGUST 28), SIAD CALLED KHAIRAT AT 6.00 AM AND TOLD HIM SOVIETS HAD SENT PLANE TO MOGADISCIO TO FETCH HIM TO MOSCOW AND SOVIETS REFUSED RETURN VIA CAIRO, WHERE GOE HAD REFUSED OVERFLIGHT RIGHTS, BUT WOULD RETURN TO MOSCOW VIA KARACHI. EGYPTIAN VISIT WOULD HAVE TO TAKE PLACE FOLLOWING HIS RETURN TO MOGADISCIO. SIAD EXPECTS TO BE IN MOSCOW NO MORE THAN TWO DAYS. CAIRO VISIT IS NOW SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 4.

3. SIAD SAID THAT HE WAS GOING TO MOSCOW TO FIND OUT FROM BREZHNEV WHAT RUSSIANS WANT OF HIM. HE BELIEVES THEY WON'T ASK WSLF TO WITHDRAW FROM OCCUPIED AREAS OF HARERGE, BALE AND SIDAMO; BUT WILL SEEK SIAD AGREEMENT TO CEASEFIRE IN PLACE. SIAD WILL REFUSE AND SAY THAT MOSCOW MUST TALK TO WSLF, NOT HIM, SINCE THIS IS WSLF FIGHT. HE HAS NO RPT NO INTENTIONS OF YIELDING TO SOVIET DEMANDS AND ETHIOPIAN FIGHT WILL CONTINUE. KHAIRAT SAID THAT SIAD
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HAD RESISTED EARLIER REQUESTS FROM BREZHNEV THAT HE GO TO MOSCOW SINCE HE WANTED TO DEAL WITH SOVIET LEADERS FROM POSITION OF STRENGTH. SIAD BELIEVES HE NOW HAS THAT STRENGTH: HE HAS ARAB SUPPORT, FIGHT IN ETHIOPIA GOING HIS WAY AND MENGISTU REGIME WILL NOT SURVIVE.

4. SIAD AND US: KHAIRAT TOLD ME THAT SIAD HAD EXPRESSED CONFUSION AND IRRITATION ABOUT US FAILURE TO PROVIDE HIM WITH ARMS. WHILE US HAD MADE PUBLIC COMMITMENT TO GIVE ARMS -- AND HE RESENTED FACT THAT US HAD MADE SUCH PUBLIC STATEMENT IF IT DIDN'T PLAN TO HONOR IT -- SIAD STILL HAD NOTHING FROM US. ACCORDING TO KHAIRAT, SIAD NOT ONLY BELIEVES US HAS DONE NOTHING TO HELP HIM BUT HE DOESN'T BELIEVE US WAS FACTOR IN EXTRAORDINARY MATERIAL AND FINANCIAL HELP HE IS GETTING FROM SAUDIS. WHEREAS SIAD IN PAST HAS IDENTIFIED SAUDI ARABIA AS COLLABORATOR OF US IN AREA, HE DOESN'T ASSOCIATE US WITH SAUDI EFFORT. (ACCORDING TO KHAIRAT, SAUDI ARABIA HAS BEEN PRINCIPAL UNDERWRITER

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MOGADISCIO 1485

EXDIS

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OF SOMALI EFFORT IN ETHIOPIAN FIGHTING. OVER PAST MONTHS,
THERE HAS BEEN STEADY FLOW OF SHIPS CARRYING ARMS
--INCLUDING US ARMS -- TO SOMALIA FROM SAUDI ARABIA.
EGYPTIAN, YAR AND OTHER ARAB CONTRIBUTION PALES IN
CONTRAST TO SAUDI SUPPORT. SIAD DISGUSTED WITH LACK OF
SUDANESE SUPPORT AND BELIEVES SUDAN HAS BEHAVED IN
COWARDLY FASHION.)

5. KHAIRAT SAID THAT SIAD INTERPRETS US FAILURE TO
HELP HIM IN TERMS OF RESIDUAL US INTEREST IN ETHIOPIA.
SIAD BELIEVES THAT US IS SUPPORTING ETHIOPIAN DEMOCRATIC
UNION (EDU) IN BELIEF THAT MENGISTU IS DOOMED TO FALL AND
EDU WILL REPLACE HIM. SIAD AGREES WITH US THAT MENGISTU
REGIME WILL COLLAPSE BUT HE IS CONVINCED US IS OUT OF
TOUCH WITH ETHIOPIAN REALITY IF IT BELIEVES EDU WILL BE
SUCCESSOR. SIAD BELIEVES ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY
PARTY (EPRP), WITH WHOM HE IS IN CONTACT (SEPTTEL) IS MOST
LIKELY SUCCESSOR MENGISTU. SIAD TOLD KHAIRAT THAT US
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RELUCTANCE TO AID HIM IS CONSEQUENCE OF WASHINGTON'S LONG
ASSOCIATION WITH ETHIOPIA AND FACT THAT IT HAS NUMBER OF
HIGHLY PLACED US SYMPATHIZERS IN ADDIS WHOM IT IS COUNTING

ON TO SUPPORT US IF GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY.

6. MILITARY SITUATION IN ETHIOPIA: AMBASSADOR KHAIRAT SAID THAT SIAD STILL OPTIMISTIC ABOUT ETHIOPIAN WAR AND BELIEVES THAT DIRE DAWA DOOMED TO FALL WITHIN SHORT TIME. WSLF IS NOW CLEARING OUT POCKETS OF ETHIOPIAN RESISTANCE AND WON'T ANNOUNCE CITY'S FALL UNTIL ETHIOPIAN UNITS CLEARED FROM SURROUNDING HILLS. MOREOVER, SOMALIA HAS AGREEMENT WITH ERITREAN LIBERATION FORCES THAT ANNOUNCEMENT OF DIRE DAWA'S FALL WILL COINCIDE WITH DESTRUCTION OF ASSAB.

7. SIAD CONFIDED TO KHAIRAT THAT ASSAB HAD BEEN ATTACKED BY QUOTE LIBERATION AIRCRAFT UNQUOTE WITHIN PAST SEVERAL DAYS AND THAT SOME DAMAGE DONE TO PORT, INCLUDING POSSIBLE DAMAGE TO NUMBER OF RUSSIAN SHIPS. BOMBING CARRIED OUT BY NIGHT. PILOTS HAD OBSERVED FIRE AND SMOKE FROM BOMBING RAID. ELF AND WSLF HOPE TO ANNOUNCE DIRE DAWA'S FALL AND ASSAB'S DESTRUCTION AS PORT FACILITY AT SAME TIME. EVEN IF DIRE DAWA NOT CAPTURED OR HELD BY WSLF IT WOULD BE RENDERED USELESS. LOSS OF ASSAB AND DIRE DAWA FACILITIES MIGHT GIVE COUP DE GRACE TO MENGISTU.

8. KHAIRAT SAID SIAD ACKNOWLEDGED ETHIOPIAN AIR SUPERIORITY IN CLOSE-SUPPORT OPERATIONS -- STRAFING AND BOMBING WSLF UNITS IN SUPPORT OF ETHIOPIAN GROUND UNITS -- BUT SAID SOMALI AF HAD SUPERIORITY IN AERIAL COMBAT. OTHER ETHIOPIAN CLAIMS OF MILITARY SUCCESS IN RECENT DAYS TOTALLY FALSE. WSLF FORCES HAVE PUSHED BEYOND NEGELE IN SIDAMO AND CITY IS SURROUNDED.

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9. REGARDING CUBANS, SIAD CLAIMED SOME TWENTY-FIVE NON-ETHIOPIAN SOLDIERS OR ADVISORS SLAIN IN DIRE DAWA FIGHTING. WSLF EXAMINATION OF BODIES DID NOT CONCLUSIVELY ESTABLISH THEIR IDENTITY BUT SIAD CLAIMED THEY WERE EITHER ADENI ARABS, SOVIET ADVISORS DRAWN FROM ASIA MINOR MINORITIES, OR CUBANS. WSLF HOPE IS THAT THEY CAN TAKE ONE CUBAN ALIVE, IN WHICH CASE SIAD WILL ASK MOROCCANS FOR TROOPS. SIAD REPEATED TO AMBASSADOR KHAIRAT SOMALI CLAIM THAT THERE ARE MINIMUM OF 5,000 AND MAXIMUM OF 15,000 CUBANS NOW IN ETHIOPIA.

10. COMMENT: AMBASSADOR KHAIRAT'S TALKS WITH SIAD SEEM TO ME BOTH UNUSUALLY CANDID AS WELL AS CREDIBLE. WE SHARE EGYPTIAN BELIEF THAT SIAD PREPARED TO YIELD NOTHING TO SOVIETS IN MOSCOW AND THAT HE IS BARGINING FROM POSITION OF STRENGTH. MOST ILLUMINATING DISCLOSURES PERTAIN TO SIAD'S PERCEPTION OF US INTERESTS IN ETHIOPIA AND HIS FAITH IN EPRP. THIS IS SUBJECT OF SEPTTEL.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONAL OPINION, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 30-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MOGADI01485
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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Format: TEL
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Handling Restrictions:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977089/aaaaagvo.tel
Line Count: 225
Litigation Code IDs:
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Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 77 MOGADISCIO 1475
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1686828
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SIADY'S INTENTIONS IN MOSCOW AND ADDIS
TAGS: PINS, ET, SO, US, UR, (MOHAMED SIAD BARRE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/2541e360-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009